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### Indian Law Clinic at UM law school gets \$100, 000 grant; will study feasibility of inter-tribal appellate courts

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# University of Montana

Office of University Relations • Missoula, Montana 59812 • (406) 243-2522

## MEDIA RELEASE

October 12, 1988

### INDIAN LAW CLINIC AT UM LAW SCHOOL GETS \$100,000 GRANT; WILL STUDY FEASIBILITY OF INTER-TRIBAL APPELLATE COURTS

MISSOULA --

The Indian Law Clinic at the University of Montana School of Law has received a one-year, \$100,000 grant to study the feasibility of an inter-tribal appellate court system in the states of Montana and Wyoming.

The Indian Law Clinic received its grant from the Montana-Wyoming Tribal Court Judges Association, which is funded by the Department of Interior's Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Entering its ninth year of operation, the Indian Law Clinic will design and administer a study of issues involved in establishing the inter-tribal appellate court system. A committee of tribal court judges will direct the study that will include local planning and investigation on each of the eight involved Indian reservations.

The project will also consider establishing a tribal judges' exchange program, through which the Montana and Wyoming tribal courts can use the services of judges from other reservations when special needs arise. If the tribal governments decide to establish an inter-tribal appellate court system, the tribal judges' association will set up the system.

The Montana-Wyoming Tribal Court Judges Association was

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organized in the spring of 1986 to further the professional advancement of tribal court judges and increase public knowledge and understanding of tribal court systems.

Judges from eight tribal courts in Montana and Wyoming comprise the association. They represent the Blackfeet Tribal Court, the Tribal Court of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, the Fort Belknap Community Tribal Court, the Fort Peck Tribal Court, the Crow Tribal Court, the Chippewa-Cree Tribal Court, the Northern Cheyenne Tribal Court and the Wind River Tribal Court.

The project directors at the UM law school are Brenda C. Desmond, phone 243-2007, and Margery H. Brown, phone 243-2544.

Don Sollars of Browning is president of the Montana-Wyoming Tribal Court Judges Association and also is chief judge of the Blackfeet Tribal Court, phone 338-5061.

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